

REMARKS

Claims 2-65 are now pending in the application. The amendments to the claims contained herein are of equivalent scope as originally filed and, thus, are not a narrowing amendment. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

FINAL REJECTION IMPROPER

At the outset, Applicant notes that the Examiner appears to be directing his rejection towards previously cancelled claim 1, as noted by Applicant in the previous amendment. Specifically, Applicant notes that the Examiner has failed to show a "flange sleeve portion." Further, Applicant notes that the Examiner shows neither "an outward sleeve portion generally parallel to the longitudinal axis of the shaft and extending generally axially outward from the flange sleeve portion" nor "an inward sleeve portion generally parallel to the longitudinal axis of the shaft and extending generally axially inward from the flange sleeve portion" as claimed in claim 2. As such, Applicant submits that the finality of this rejection is improper and should, therefore, be withdrawn.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 AND 103

Claims 2, 3, 10, and 13-65 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Katzensteiner (U.S. Pat. No. 5,211,406, hereinafter "Katzensteiner"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicant submits that claim 2 is not properly anticipated by Katzensteiner '406. Specifically, Applicant notes that claim 2 now includes the features of "said outward sleeve portion including an endpoint defining an axially outermost point disposed in a first direction relative to said flange sleeve portion" and "said inward sleeve portion including an endpoint defining an axially innermost point disposed in a second direction relative to said flange sleeve portion opposite said first direction." Katzensteiner clearly fails to disclose axially innermost and outermost endpoints in opposite directions relative to the flange sleeve portion. If the Examiner were to interpret Katzensteiner to show an inward sleeve portion 10 and an outward sleeve portion 25, these sleeve portions appear to extend in the same direction as one another. Previously presented claim 2 required outward sleeve portion "extending generally axially outward from the flange sleeve portion" and an inward sleeve portion "extending generally axially inward from the flange sleeve portion." As such, the inward and outward sleeve portions of previously presented claim 2 extend in generally opposite directions. Amended claim 2 further clarifies this distinction, requiring innermost and outermost endpoints in directions generally parallel to the shaft and generally opposite one another. As such, Applicant submits that amended claim 2 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 3, 10, and 13-65 depend from claim 2 and should be in condition for allowance for the reasons set forth above regarding claim 2. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2, 3, 10, and 13-65 are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (734) 354-5445.

Respectfully submitted,

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